



Well, here we are in 2012 and to make sure the year continues to go well we have another edition of Teen Librarian Monthly.

If you have a budding mad scientist using your library, you may want to introduce them to the Google Science Fair, an international competition aimed at finding the scientists of tomorrow today. Staying with the tech theme, there is also a brief introduction to Codeyear, a weekly coding lesson provided by the Code Academy and delivered to your inbox, use it to teach yourself programming skills or run a weekly Teen Tech Group in your library and create something marvellous!

Amnesty International is running their Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year competition, this is something you could use to introduce teens to reportage and also human rights.

Scottish Booktrust is hosting another of their Authors Live events, this Thursday you will get to hear Liz Lochhead, Scotland's Makar (royal bard). I also take a short look at the Michael Morpurgo book offer from McDonalds.

Unless you have been living under a rock you will know that next week hosts the UK's very first (I think) National Libraries Day on the 4th February (yay). I also include some information on a competition from JCS Online that offers a school the chance to win a subscription to one of their services.

2012 also sees the launch of several new YA imprints, including Strange Chemistry. I have included a link to an excellent article by Bali Rai titled *In Defence of Books* which is well worth a read!

In keeping with my attempt at offering ideas at low to no cost library events I have included a creative writing idea that was spawned from a New York Times article I read recently. Finally this month's Eight Questions With... interview is with the

brilliant Sara Grant, author of the new dystopian novel *Dark Parties*.

Google Science Fair

The Google Science Fair is an online science competition open to all students aged 13 to 18 from around the world. Anybody and everybody between 13 and 18 can enter. All you need is an idea.

Students can sign up to enter the competition from 12 January 2012 by visiting the Science Fair website and clicking the blue "Start your project" button at the top of the screen.

The Google Science Fair is an online science competition seeking curious minds from the four corners of the globe.

<http://bit.ly/hae9T2>

Codeyear

[Codecademy](http://codecademy.com) a startup that's looking to bring programming to the masses launched a nifty initiative called [Code Year](http://codeyear.com). It's pretty straightforward: sign up, and each week you'll receive some programming lessons in your email inbox.

<http://codeyear.com/>

Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year 2012

Young Human Rights Reporter of the Year 2012 competition for seven to 18 year-olds
<http://bit.ly/utODxK>

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Marion walks into the library and says loudly to the librarian: 'Can I have a burger and fries?'

The Librarian whispers: 'Ssssh...Sorry, this is a library.'

Marion whispers back: 'Oh, may I have a burger and fries?'

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Authors Live: Celebrate Burns Night with Scotland's Makar Liz Lochhead, National Poet of Scotland



Event info:

Date: Thursday 26th January 2012

Time: 11am – 11.40am

Age group: 9-16

Join the Scottish Makar, Liz Lochhead, National Poet of Scotland for a very special celebration of Robert Burns. Liz will be discussing why Burns means so much to her, as well as treating us to some readings of her own poems featured in her collections *Liz Lochhead: Selected Works*, *Colour of Black and White* and *Dreaming Frankenstein*. The event is suitable for P6-S4 (age 9-16) pupils and fans of Robert Burns, Liz Lochhead or just poetry in general!

Biography:

Scottish poet and playwright Liz Lochhead was born in Motherwell in 1947. After studying at Glasgow School of Art she taught at art schools in Glasgow and Bristol while working on her poetry. She is a Fellow of Glasgow School of Art, an Honorary Doctor of Letters of Glasgow University, a Fellow of RSAMD and of Glasgow Institute of Art, and is an Honorary President of the Scottish Poetry Library. She was named as Scotland's Makar in 2011. Liz firmly believes that poetry can transcend age boundaries and enjoys reading her poetry to a wide range of people.

Her poetry collections include *Dreaming Frankenstein* (Polygon 1984), *True Confessions and New Clichés*, *Bagpipe Muzak*, and *The Colour of Black and White: Poems 1984–2003*. Her plays include *Tartuffe*, *Mary Queen of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off* and the Saltire Society Scottish Book of the Year Award-winning *Medea*. Liz Lochhead lives in Glasgow.

<http://bit.ly/tv11Lx>

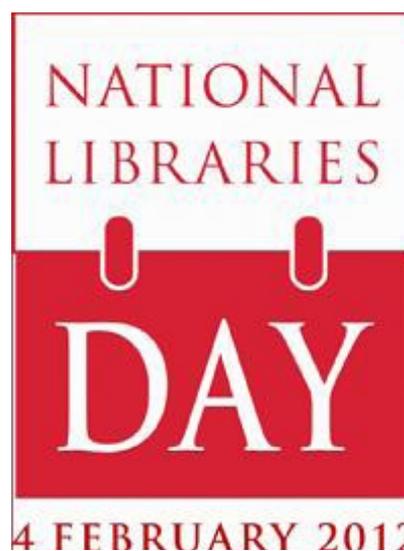
Michael Morpurgo books at McDonald's

Michael Morpurgo's beloved Mudpuddle Farm books are now at McDonald's and your kids can discover the funny farmyard adventures of the Mudpuddle animals while also being inspired to make up their own farmyard stories.

The only catch is you don't actually get the books at point of purchase, rather you get a voucher that you can exchange at W.H. Smiths. Not being a fan of the golden arches I am in two minds about this, one side it will (hopefully) put books into the hands of people that may not usually purchase them but on the other hand it is McDonald's.

More details below:

<http://bit.ly/xj4FKj>



National Libraries Day is devoted to all types of libraries, library users, staff and supporters across the UK. Join in by organising a celebratory event, contributing to our forums, tweeting with

the [#NLD12 hashtag](#) and visiting your local library on the 4 February or the week leading up to it.

<http://nationallibrariesday.org.uk/>

To celebrate **National Libraries Day** on 4th February 2012, **JCS Online Resources** is running a competition which is open to all secondary schools and 6th Form Colleges in the UK and abroad.

The six best entries as judged by the JCS team will win a year's free subscription to one of the following online resources:

1. [Bridgeman Education](#)

355,000+ copyright cleared images providing access to the visual culture of every civilization and period from prehistory to the present.

2. [Keesing's World News Archive](#)

(including a 2012 print subscription) - A comprehensive, concise and regularly updated record of the world's most important political, social and economic events since 1931.

3. The Royal Society of Chemistry's [Chemistry World](#) and [Education in Chemistry](#)

- Two magazines which present authoritative review articles on a wide variety of chemical topics, from historical to state-of-the-art chemistry for teachers and students.

4. [eChalk](#) - A broad and expanding range of curriculum-mapped games, puzzles, simulations and starter activities.

5. [Scran](#) - 360,000 images, sounds, movies and learning resources copyright-cleared for educational use.

6. [Credo Reference](#) - A multi-publisher online reference library offering a wide range of innovative features.

For full details follow this link:

<http://bit.ly/wcNiJh>

Angry Robot Announces New YA Imprint Strange Chemistry

Angry Robot, the award-winning publisher of SF, F and WTF are pleased to announce their newest venture – a sister imprint, Strange Chemistry, which will publish Young Adult genre fiction.

The imprint will launch in September 2012, with five titles appearing before the end of that year, before settling down to one book each month. Strange Chemistry will follow

AR's strategy of co-publishing its books simultaneously in the US and UK, in both eBook and paperback formats. Subject matter will include fantasy, science fiction, supernatural and horror, and as with Angry Robot the lines between those genres are likely to be very blurry at times.

More information can be found at www.strangechemistrybooks.com and www.angryrobotbooks.com

In Defence of Books

In Defence of Books is a blog post written by the awesome Bali Rai (current Booktrust writer in residence).

Read it here:

<http://bit.ly/zojnn8> It is brilliant!

Creative Writing: Zombie Poetry

I was reading the New York Times online edition and came across this extremely interesting article:

[What Rhymes with 'Undead'? Some Poets Know](#)

It made for interesting reading.

I have worked with a number of teens that would respond well to the idea of creating zombie poetry. It is quirky enough to attract even some of the hardest to reach kids and with zombies becoming more mainstream it would not put off too many of the more normal young people.

Creating a Zombie-themed writing event

could be run over two or even more meetings. It is a little-known fact that *Night of the Living Dead* – the movie that started the zombie movement is now in the public domain and can be shown freely in libraries without the need for permissions.

The entire film can be watched online here:

<http://youtu.be/HeYzwj6S-Q8>

The film can be used to discuss how zombies in cinema & on television have changed over the decades, from the slow shambling monstrosities of *Night of the Living Dead* to the faster shambling monstrosities of *28 Days Later* and *The Walking Dead*. You can bill it as a mixed media Zombie poetry writing session, including movies, books, comics including *The Walking Dead*, *Marvel Zombies* and [more](#). There are even musicians that have written songs about zombies but they may not be appropriate for the audience, for an example take a listen to Voltaire singing [Zombie Prostitute](#).

There are examples of zombie poems online in case you need to provide inspiration, including the [Little Book of Zombie Poems](#) by Tom Beckett.

Teen Librarian Needs You!



To share your ideas for teen events and activities in Libraries! Send your ideas to: [editor\[at\]teenlibrarian.co.uk](mailto:editor[at]teenlibrarian.co.uk)

Everyone who submits ideas will be credited (unless anonymity is requested). Where two or more people submit the same or similar ideas credit will be shared.

Eight questions with... Sara Grant

1. What influenced your decision to write for teenagers?

So many of the books I love, the books I cherish, were books I read when I was a teenager. There's something about those books that introduce you to the world and challenge your brain in ways it has never been challenged before. When I started taking my writing seriously, I was drawn to create stories for children and teens. I wanted to write stories that my teenage self would have enjoyed.

2. How do you get into the heads of your characters?

Sometimes it feels as if it's the other way around. How do the characters get into my head? Usually a character presents itself in my brain. As I begin to tell the story, the characters seem to reveal themselves to me. Then in the revision process I smooth out the character's rough edges and make their voice, appearance – everything about them – consistent.

3. Do you know instinctively what will appeal to Teens or is it more of a hit and miss process?

I write the story I feel compelled to write and hope it will find a readership.

4. What is the most satisfying part of the writing process for you?

I love the initial rush of the first draft. That's when I tell the story to myself. I'm often surprised at what happens next and delighted when the plot comes together in a way that I hadn't originally envisioned.

5. Do you ever read the works of other Teen/YA authors? If yes what can you recommend?

I'm always reading teen fiction. There are so many amazing authors out there writing for teens. I'd definitely recommend *15 Days Without a Head* and *Someone Else's Life* which will both be published in early 2012. I was also blown away by *Nothing* by Janne Teller. I've never read anything like it. It's shocking and not for the faint of heart, but it's a real meaning of life book

that a year later I'm still thinking about it. I also have recently discovered Libba Bray. I loved *Going Bovine* and *Beauty Queens*. Her books are funny and insightful and layered.

6. Are any of your novels based on personal experiences?

I'm surprised how much of me and my life sneaks into the pages of my book. When I started writing *Dark Parties*, I found out my dad had been diagnosed with cancer. All of a sudden, Neva, my main character, was talking about wanting to make her father proud of her. It became one of the underlying themes of the book.

I consciously included my grandma in the pages of *Dark Parties*. I named Neva's grandma Ruth after my dad's mom. The way Ruth is described in the book as well as her feisty spirit – that's my grandma. Also Neva's desire to see her grandma again and the special connection she has to her grandma – well, that's all me.

7. Are you are working on anything new at the moment or do you have anything planned?

I'm in the middle of revising my second book, which is scheduled to come out in the spring of 2013. It's another stand-alone dystopian novel. Its working title is *Half Lives*. It's a work in progress, but here's what I know so far:

Half Lives chronicles the journey of two unlikely heroes – Icie and Beckett. Both struggle to keep themselves alive and protect future generations from the terrible fate that awaits any who dare to climb the mountain. Even though they live hundreds of years apart, Icie and Beckett's lives are mysteriously linked.

Half Lives is a race against time and the battle to save future generations. It's about the nature of faith and power of miscommunication – and above all the strength of the human spirit to adapt and survive.

8. Do you ever do Library visits to Teen Reading Groups? If yes, what is the best way to get into contact with you or your agent about it?

I love to talk with teens about writing and reading. Librarians are welcome to contact me at sara@sara-grant.com.



A review of *Dark Parties* can be read on Teen Librarian: <http://bit.ly/zD7zaa>